

<b>DIVISION OF MINES</b>	<b>CHAPTER: IX Certification</b>
<b>PROCEDURES MANUAL</b>	
	<b>PROCEDURE NO: 1.09.01</b>
	<b>ISSUE DATE: January 1, 1997</b>
<b>SUBJECT: Certification Of Miners</b>	<b>LAST REVISED: 1/29/99; 5/1/99;10/00</b>

## OBJECTIVE AND INTENT

To provide guidance to DM personnel to enable consistent and accurate communication regarding the certification process.

## GENERAL

### 1. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- Virginia's Mine Safety Act requires persons working in and around a mine site be certified for certain jobs they perform in the coal mining industry. Refer to Board of Coal Mining Examiners Requirements for a complete listing of required certifications and experience/education needed to obtain certification.

### 2. PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATIONS

- An applicant must submit the following:
  - a. \$10.00 fee (check or money order suggested if mailed) payable to the Treasurer of Virginia. (See "Notice To All Applicants For Certification Examination" regarding non-refundable fee. Notice is attached to this procedure.)
  - b. Complete a DM-BCME-1 form, Application for Certification Examination
  - c. Notarized work experience form, DM-BCME-2
  - d. Verification of first aid (5000-23, EMT or First Responder card)
- Applications may be submitted to the Division of Mines Big Stone Gap or Keen Mountain office. **The application and \$10.00 fee must be received at least five working days prior to the specified examination day.** Work experience and verification of first aid must be received prior to certification.

### 3. GRADE REQUIREMENTS

- First Class Mine Foreman, Surface Foreman, Surface Blaster, Underground Shot Firer must pass an examination with 85% on each section. All others are required to pass at 80% on each section.

#### 4. EXAMINATION

- The Regulatory Boards Administrator will present a brief overview of the following prior to each examination:
  - a. Instructions regarding examination such as proper use of answer sheet, completion of map, electrical drawings, etc.
  - b. Monitoring of examination
  - c. Retake procedure
  - d. Recertification requirements
  - e. Reciprocity, if applicable
  - f. Grading process
  - g. Issuance
- An examination can be taken no more than three times in a one year period.
- If all or part of an examination is failed, the applicant must wait at least ten working days to retake.
- If a section is failed the second time, the applicant must wait at least 20 working days and must retake entire exam.
- If on the third take the applicant fails any section of the exam, the applicant must wait the greater of one year from the date of the first examination, before retaking the examination.
- If more than a year lapses before the third retake of a section(s), the entire application and examination procedure must be completed.
- No oral examinations are administered.
- Examinations begin at 8:00 a.m. and must be completed by 4:00 p.m. Exams are held twice a month: one at Keen Mountain Office and one at the Big Stone Gap Office. The examination roster is limited to 20 clients and only 5 of the 20 scheduled may be First Class Mine Foreman examinations due to the space necessary to work on the maps that are a part of the examination. Electrical examinations that require the practical sections must be limited to four per examination date due to time required to administer the practical section of the examination. This does not prevent special examinations where provisions are made for larger numbers of clients, such as when an electrical or mine foreman class is examined.
- If gas detection is required for certification, the gas examination will be administered the day of the examination.
- General coal miner certification training can be scheduled and administered on the regular examination dates. Examination fees should be paid in accordance with Board of Coal Mining Examiners' regulations.

## 5. CERTIFICATION UPDATE

- The Certification Update Committee consisting of five members from various sections of DM and chaired by the Regulatory Boards Administrator will function to ensure a quality certification program for coal industry personnel by developing study guides and examinations based on the study guides, state, and federal laws.
- The committee determines projects based on the need of the coal industry, recommendations from the Board, or changes necessitated by law or regulation.
- Reference materials are obtained from various sources such as state and federal laws, regulations, and the MSHA academy.
- The initial development of the examination establishes a data bank that will enable generation of a different examination for each individual examined.

## PROCEDURE

### 1. GENERAL COAL MINER

- Any person commencing work in a Virginia coal mine subsequent to January 1, 1996, must hold a general coal miner certificate issued by the Board of Coal Mining Examiners. Any person who has been employed to work in a coal mine in Virginia prior to that date may, **but shall not be required to**, hold a general coal miner certificate.
- Coal operators and independent contractors working at a Virginia coal mine are responsible under the Mine Safety Act to assure that all of their employees commencing work after January 1, 1996, who are required to obtain a general coal mine certificate, possess a certificate issued by the Board. **This requirement applies to any new inexperienced person entering the work force, and to anyone moving to Virginia's coal mining industry from another state.**
- Independent contractor employees who are directly involved in the actual coal mining process are required to meet the general coal miner certification requirement. **Being directly involved in the mining process is interpreted to mean performing activities in extracting, hauling and preparing coal mined.**

- Following completion of requirements for certification, a certification card will be issued for General Coal Miner. Certification cards will be produced for General Miner Surface, and General Miner Underground. Requirements for certification:
  - a. \$10.00 fee
  - b. Application
  - c. Verification of Training form DM-BCME-3
  - d. Verification of First Aid (If not done as training verified on Form DM-BCME-3)
  - e. Gas detection for underground

## 2. RECIPROCITY

- Currently, DM recognizes reciprocity for Surface Blasting, MET\* (Mine Emergency Technician), and Electrical Repairman\*\* Certifications from Kentucky; Surface Blasters, First Class Mine Foreman, Surface Foreman, and Electrical Certifications from West Virginia.

\*MET (Mine Emergency Technician) Certification, current at time of class. A person certified as a Mine Emergency Technician in Kentucky or West Virginia can meet the Virginia Advanced First Aid program certification by:

- a. providing a copy of current MET card, and,
- b. attending an eight hour Advanced First Aid Reciprocity Class.

\*\* Anyone holding a current Electrical Repairman Certification from Kentucky or West Virginia may meet reciprocity requirements if the certified person:

- a. submits a copy of grades,
- b. completes a DM-BCME 2,
- c. submits a Verification of Work Experience (verifying one year of electrical experience), and,
- d. the individual has one opportunity to pass the electrical examination practical stations. These individuals ARE NOT ELIGIBLE for a retake. If any section of the examination is failed, they must take the entire examination prior to certification. NOTE: Individuals receiving electrical certification through this process are NOT eligible for a reciprocity from VA to WV under the Reciprocity Agreement between the two states.

- To receive certification by reciprocity:
  - a. Submit application, DM-BCME-1
  - b. Submit DMLR endorsement application, DMLR-BCME-4 (Surface Blaster only)
  - c. \$10.00 fee
  - d. Verification of certification (card or documentation from state agency where certification is held.)

- e. Verification of First Aid (5000-23, EMT, First Responder)
- f. Electrical reciprocity must provide verification of current electrical retraining.
- g. Surface Foreman and First Class Mine Foreman must submit to and pass with a minimum score of 85%, the components of the Virginia mine foreman examination related to Virginia mining laws, rules and regulations.

### 3. REPLACEMENT CARDS

- Replacement cards for valid certifications may be obtained by payment of \$1.00 for each card at the Keen Mountain or Big Stone Gap offices. The name as it appears on the card, the certification number and if possible, a copy of the old card should be presented. The social security number should be included with the correct return mailing address and telephone number when requesting by mail.

### 4. STUDY MATERIALS

- Study guides/materials are available through either the Keen Mountain or Big Stone Gap offices. As prices are subject to change, cost should be verified prior to ordering.
  - a. Diesel Engine Mechanic \$3.00
  - b. Electrical Study Guide \$7.00
  - c. First Aid For Miners \$5.50
  - d. First Class Mine Foreman \$7.00
  - e. Hoisting Engineer \$6.00
  - f. Shot Firer \$5.00
  - g. Surface Blaster \$6.00
  - h. Surface Facilities Foreman \$5.00
  - i. Surface Foreman \$7.00

#### **Available At No Charge**

- a. Coal Mine Safety Laws of Virginia
- b. DMLR endorsement for blasting
- c. Mine Gases Handbook
- d. DM Regulations

## **NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS FOR CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION**

**The Board of Coal Mining Examiners has approved the following procedures regarding certification examination scheduling and payment of fees. The Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy will implement these procedures beginning May 1, 1999:**

- 1. If you are unable to attend your scheduled examination session, please notify the Division of Mines at least three (3) days prior to the scheduled examination date by calling (540) 523-8149 (Big Stone Gap) or (540) 498-4533 (Keen Mountain).**
- 2. Failure to notify the Division within three days of the scheduled examination will result in the forfeiture of your examination fee. The forfeited fee is used to cover administrative expenses incurred by the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy.**
- 3. You may reschedule your examination date when you notify the Division of Mines of your cancellation. You will not be charged a new fee if you reschedule within three days of your original exam date. If your fee is forfeited because you did not contact DM within the prescribed time period, you will be required to remit another fee when you reschedule. You may be asked to submit another application with your fee depending on the time interval for scheduling a new examination date.**
- 4. Should you have questions regarding these procedures, please contact Mary Gibson, (540) 523-8234.**